

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUDAPE 00989 251534Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13
ACDA-07 DHA-02 /074 W
-----251553Z 103739 /53

O R 251442Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8177
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0989

1. CONVERSATIONS OVER PAST SEVERAL DAYS WITH RELIABLE EMBASSY
CONTACTS HAVING GOOD TIES TO HUNGARIAN PARTY CIRCLES
REVEAL THE EMERGENCE OF A PARTY LINE, WITHOUT DOUBT
EMANATING FROM MOSCOW, ON SOVIET VIEWS ABOUT FUTURE OF
DETENTE AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS IN VIEW OF U.S. ADMINISTRATION
STAND IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.
2. THE PICTURE IS ONE OF A GRIM, REMARKABLY INSECURE, ALMOST
PARANOID SOVIET PARTY LEADERSHIP, WORRIED TO DEATH ABOUT WHAT IT
PERCEIVES AS A GENUINE THREAT OR CHALLENGE TO ITS POWER, AND
INCREDIBLE AS IT MAY SEEM, BELIEVING THAT THE U.S.
STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS A DELIBERATE STRATEGY DESIGNED
TO OVERTHROW THE SOVIET REGIME.
3. WE WOULD HESITATE TO TAKE THESE STATEMENTS
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SERIOUSLY, IF IT WERE NOT FOR FACT THAT WE HAVE BEEN HEARING
THEM RECENTLY ALMOST IDENTICALLY, WORD FOR WORD, FROM SO MANY
SOURCES WHICH HAVE ALWAYS BEEN RELIABLE IN THE PAST. SOME OF
OUR HUNGARIAN CONTACTS POINT OUT THAT THEIR OWN VIEWS ARE NOT
NEARLY SO GRIM, BUT THAT THESE DO NOT REFLECT FEELINGS
OF SOVIETS WHICH ARE BEING PASSED ON DOWN THE LINE.

4. WE FIND EVEN MORE UNBELIEVABLE ANOTHER PART OF THE SAME SET OF CONVICTIONS, NAMELY THAT THE ROSSIA HOTEL FIRE AND THE MOSCOW METRO EXPLOSION ARE EVIDENCE THAT THE WEST IN GENERAL AND THE CIA IN PARTICULAR ARE SWINGING INTO ACTION, GIVING DIRECT SUPPORT TO SOVIET DISSIDENTS TURNED ACTIVE REVOLUTIONARIES. AND, THE SOVIETS ARE ALSO SAID TO BE CONVINCED THAT EVERY DISSIDENT EQUALS A PERSON COMMITTED TO THE VIOLENT OVERTHROW OF THE SOVIET REGIME.

5. WE HAVE CATEGORICALLY CHALLENGED THESE ASSERTIONS EVERY TIME WE HEAR THEM. THE REPLY WE RECEIVE IN EACH CASE IS QUOTE YOU MAY BE ABLE TO CONVINCE US BUT YOU WILL NEVER CONVINCE THE RUSSIANS UNQUOTE.

6. ONE SOURCE, PARTICULARLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF PROGRESS IN ANY AREA OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THE PAST WHEN SOVIETS WERE WILLING TO TALK IN SPITE OF THE VIETNAM WAR, BERLIN, PORTUGAL OR ANGOLA. "THEN YOU WERE BOMBING HANOI, BUT NOW YOU ARE BOMBING MOSCOW", HE SAID.

7. HUNGARIAN LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO AWAIT SECRETARY VANCE'S TRIP TO MOSCOW WITH BAITED BREATH, HOPING THAT SOMEHOW THINGS WILL FALL BACK INTO PLACE, BUT BEING HUNGARIANS FIRST AND FOREMOST, THEY ARE MOSTLY AFRAID THAT THINGS WILL NEVER BE QUITE THE SAME AGAIN.

8. EMBASSY VIEWS ON IMPACT OF ALL THIS ON BILATERAL
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RELATIONS ARE GIVEN IN BUDAPEST 0926. WHILE A NEW NOTE OF CAUTION HAS CREPT INTO GOH POSITIONS ON ISSUES VIS-A-VIS THE U.S., THERE IS AS YET NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ANY CHANGE IN THE POLICY OF ACTIVELY PURSUING IMPROVED U.S.-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS IS BEING CONSIDERED. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, GOH IS HIGHLY AWARE OF REALITY THAT THEIR OWN RELATIVELY PROGRESSIVE POLICY ON IMPROVED U.S. TIES, CSCE AND CULTURAL POLICY CANNOT LONG SURVIVE A LASTING SETBACK IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS.

9. WE BELIEVE THAT HUNGARIANS ARE ACCURATELY REFLECTING VIBRATIONS EMANATING FROM MOSCOW, AND WHICH TO SOME DEGREE MAY ALSO REFLECT VIEWS OF SOME OF THEIR OWN MORE CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE POSSIBILITY CANNOT BE RULED OUT THAT THE HUNGARIAN AND OTHER EE PARTIES ARE SIMPLY BEING ENLISTED BY MOSCOW IN A CAMPAIGN TO HELP SOVIET EFFORTS TO SCARE THE WEST AWAY FROM ITS PRESENT HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, HUMAN RIGHTS, DETENTE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COMMUNIST DOCTRINE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BUDAPE00989
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED PER BUDAPEST 1079
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770103-0150
Format: TEL
From: BUDAPEST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770323/aaaaatsd.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ba9161b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3001050
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EMERGING PARTY LINE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND US SOVIET RELATIONS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR, XH, US, HU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ba9161b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009